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congressman
ROBERT BRADY
serving pennsylvania's first district

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The Brady Brief - Repealing Don't Ask, Don't Tell

Dear Friend,

This week, the House of Representatives voted for the second time to repeal the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. I proudly voted for this repeal because this discriminatory and harmful policy has weakened America's security by depriving our nation of the service of thousands of gay and lesbian troops who have served their country honorably.

Our nation's military is a source of pride for all Americans, and remains a symbol of the power of the American people. Yet, our military is also a source of discrimination in its handling of our gay and lesbian soldiers. An estimated 66,000 gay and lesbian Americans are currently serving in the United States military, putting their lives on the line to uphold the American way of life. They train, serve, and sacrifice in the same way as any other American soldier. Yet, due to the "don't ask, don't tell" policy of the United States military, over 13,000 of these soldiers have been discharged since 1993.

This bill would repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" only after a certification by the Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and the President that repeal is first, consistent with military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion, and recruiting; and second, that the DOD has prepared the necessary policies and regulations to implement repeal. Repeal is currently supported by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in addition to countless other military leaders. Last month, the Department of Defense surveyed service members on the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell and found that an overwhelming majority (70%) of service members believe that serving beside an openly gay colleague would have positive, mixed or no effect on unit cohesion.

Repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell is currently awaiting action in the Senate, and I hope my colleagues will move quickly to pass this important measure. I look forward to continuing to fight for every member of our armed services, and remain committed to promoting equality for all Americans. Should you have any questions about this bill, or any other issue, please contact me at any of my offices.

Sincerely,



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Robert Brady
Member of Congress

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District Office

1907-09 S. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19148
Phone: (215) 389-4627
Fax: (215) 389-4636

Delaware County

The Colony Building
511-13 Welsh St. 1st Floor
Chester, PA 19013
Phone: (610) 874-7094
Fax: (610) 874-7193

Memphis Street

2630 Memphis St.
Philadelphia, PA 19125
Phone: (215) 426-4616
Fax: (215) 426-7741

District Office

2637 E. Clearfield Street
Philadelphia, PA 19134
Phone: (267) 519-2252
Fax: (267) 519-2262

Washington D.C. Office

102 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC. 20515
Phone: (202) 225-4731
Fax: (202) 225-0088

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